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M E D I C A L

EXPERIENCE AND TESTIMONY

IN FAVOUR OF

TOTAL ABSTINENCE.

BEING PAPERS AND LETTERS PREPARED FOR A
MEDICAL CONFERENCE HELD IN LONDON,
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BY
WILLIAM TWEEDIE, 337, STRAND.

PREFATORY NOTE.

THE Committee of the National Temperance League feel grateful for the privilege of being permitted to publish the accompanying letters and papers, which were read at a Conference recently convened by them in the City Terminus Hotel, Cannon Street. The Conference was attended by a large body of the leading promoters of the Temperance Movement, as well as by medical practitioners from different parts of the country, and the proceedings were well fitted to encourage those who are striving to diffuse correct information regarding the nature and effects of intoxicating liquors, and the value of total abstinence as a means of promoting health and longevity. The Committee are of opinion that the valuable contributions of their medical friends should not be confined to those who attended the Conference, and they have therefore great pleasure in being the medium of placing in the hands of the public a mass of evidence in favour of the Temperance Movement, which they believe to be well worthy of a careful and thoughtful perusal.

337, Strand, 1st July, 1869.

MEDICAL EXPERIENCE AND TESTIMONY.

HENRY MUNROE, M.D., F.L.S., HULL.

AFTER more than thirty years' professional experience, I have come to the conclusion that alcohol is injurious to the body in health, and disputable as a curative agent in disease. It is now many years since I left off taking it in any form ; and my own experience tells me that I can work more cheerfully, breathe more freely, and enjoy life more happily without it than I ever could with it. This is not only my own experience, but that of almost all who have tried the experiment of the two ways of living ; but so powerful are the inducements, arising from appetite, custom, and fashion, to partake of intoxicating beverages, that it is difficult to convince the public to believe those scientific truths which proclaim that alcohol is a poison and not a food. Even scientific men require, after all, some scientific proof of the use of alcohol, in certain forms, in health. If possible, they want to arrive at the knowledge of what amount of alcohol may be taken by a civilised man, and yet keep in health ! Scientific facts strongly tend to show that both the mental, vital, and physical powers of man in health are, on the whole, depressed and maimed by the use of alcohol ; and that we must not flatter ourselves that we are taking food and nourishment when we are only swallowing a poison. Distinguished physiologists have, in spite of themselves, been driven to the conclusion that alcohol is unnecessary and injurious to the healthy body. Dr. Lankester frankly admits that it charms the palate, and that its use is an exercise of the virtue of self-control. Some of our leading physicians, aware of the injury its presence in the system occasions, own that they take it because it is "nice" ; and others, although they are cognisant of its tendency to shorten life, say that they would rather live a few years less than forego the pleasurable things it awakens. In fact, they fall back upon the old story—that persons take alcohol "because they like it" !

There is an opinion entertained by some scientific men, that our civilisation may have brought us to a condition which, as compared with gorillas and savages, may be said to be morbid or diseased, and that, in order to remove the tendency of this condition to bring on more serious departures from health, doses of alcohol, varying from half an ounce to two ounces, every twenty-four hours, may be advisable. The experience of every-day life teaches a far different lesson, and that just the opposite results would occur. Would the drinking of spirituous liquors elevate the gorilla or the savage to that high state of civilisation which is a morbid or diseased condition ? Does not the drinking of these very liquors too often degenerate human beings, highly educated and civilised, into animals of this ferocious class ? Let me instance the drunken debaucheries and the horrid scenes that battle description, which took place at New Brighton, near Liverpool, when a ship laden with rum was unfortunately wrecked ashore. Numbers of the inhabitants, living in a high state of civilisation, were in a few hours changed into the characters of gorillas and savages, and committed such wild, extravagant, and demoniacal actions as the press dared scarcely chronicle. Have not the revelations of many of the poor victims who have ended their existence on the scaffold, told the same sad story—that it was intoxicating drink that changed their nature, otherwise kind and forbearing, into that of the savage ?

Even the moderate use of intoxicating drink is a practice to be condemned. I have known many persons, strictly conscientious and truthful, after having par-

taken of a few glasses of wine, relate such stories as they could not have given utterance to in abstinent moments. A commercial man, whom I persuaded to try total abstinence, declared to me that a single glass of ale or wine took the edge off his mind, and that he was not the same after that he was before he took it; and that, to his after regret, he often found, even after a glass of bitter beer, he had been recommending his articles for sale in an exaggerated style that he never could have employed except under such influence.

Our opponents have argued that men who work like horses, may and do live like horses, on corn and water; but those who are calculating, thinking, and reasoning twelve hours out of the twenty-four, require a more refined sort of food and drink. A countryman might look well and rosy upon his bread and cabbage, hard pudding and water, but does it follow that such fare would suit the London lawyer, barrister, or member of Parliament? How many a nobleman, barrister, or member of Parliament would at this moment give half his fortune if he could possess the rosy look, the healthy body, the keen appetite, the contented mind, of this coarsely-fed country labourer—nay, would even eat cabbage and bacon and drink water for the rest of his life if he could be as happy in heart, as free from worldly care and ambition as that poor cottager, and, like him, when his daily toil is done, lie down to rest and sleep so sweetly, that even a child, tired out with play, might envy.

Still it is argued, that if the brain of a London clerk demands a supply of nourishing (?) stout, that of a working statesman like Gladstone should require good animal food and an alcoholic liquor of great purity and refinement, something approaching Cœnanthic ether. What nonsense to suppose that men who live by their brains require wines of such delicacy of taste to keep up their strength of body! Who worked harder, and exercised his brain more, than did that exemplary member of Parliament, the late Richard Cobden? What wine of such great purity and refinement did he take to increase his nerve force? He drank the same pure, sparkling, life-giving water as that which rose in bubbling springs, amidst sunny flowers and cloudless skies, in the Garden of Eden, and which quenched the natural thirst of our first parents before their fall. Innocent water was the beverage which cooled his parched tongue, tranquillised his excited brain, after the toils and heat of many a prolonged debate in the House, and, after his midnight task was done, it soothed his worn-out mind and body with undisturbed, refreshing sleep, which enabled him, with a clear head, to begin again his next day's labour with renewed strength, unknown to those who indulge in the feverish excitement and consequent exhaustion of intoxicating beverages. I could mention the names of many honourable members who, in the present House of Commons, perform a large share of the work entirely on total abstinence principles. Is it not an indisputable fact that where much mental labour is required for any lengthened period of time, to ensure success, all alcoholic liquors must be abjured? Is it not the daily experience of everyone that sustained bodily, as well as mental, labour is better performed without the aid of intoxicating drink than with it? The public do not want a medical man to assure them of this fact. Even non-professional writers, who have had any experience of prolonged exertion of the body, arrive at a similar conclusion. "Newtonensis," not a teetotaler, in his little work on "Shooting," says:—"I am no advocate for employing any form of alcoholic beverages, unless in special cases, while actually out shooting. A glass of beer and a sandwich are well enough for those who are used to them; but, in my experience, I find nothing half so sustaining as a hard-boiled egg and cold tea."

I have had, for the last seven years, much experience in the medical attendance upon persons who are total abstainers. During that period hundreds of that class of persons have been under my care. I find that, as a class, they do not suffer from anything like the amount of sickness experienced by moderate drinkers of intoxicating drinks; that when they are sick, the sickness is much more amenable to treatment, and, necessarily, they are sooner well again. Moreover, I am convinced that, in many cases, the patient's recovery was entirely owing to a life of previous abstinence from intoxicating beverages. On comparing the results of sickness and death occurring in two large friendly societies under my care, the one composed of total abstainers and the other of non-abstainers, I have arrived at

the conclusion that the total abstainers have much better health, are liable to a much less amount of sickness, and have fewer deaths than the moderate drinkers. In the non-abstinent society I find that the average amount of sickness experienced last year was eleven days, twenty-one hours per member, and that the number of deaths was about one and a-half per cent. In the total abstinent society the amount of sickness experienced last year did not amount to more than one day and three-quarters per member, and the number of deaths was only two in five years, or less than one-quarter per cent. per annum. I ought, perhaps, in justice to myself, to add that, in the treatment of the various diseases in both societies, no alcoholic liquor was administered. It is now seven years since I have ordered any alcoholic drink either as a medicine or diet ; and the success attendant upon its disuse, in cases where in former years I should have ordered it largely, and condemned myself if I had not done so, is so gratifying as to lead me to its entire abandonment in the treatment of disease. In typhoid fever, as well as in other cases of fever of the worst character, in cholera, in sudden and violent hæmorrhages, in delirium tremens, in rheumatism, in gout, and in many other diseases, the success of this treatment, without the use of alcohol, has been most marked and satisfactory. Our profession is now beginning to doubt the vaunted efficacy of alcohol as a therapeutic agent. Its reputation for the cure of disease is becoming exceedingly problematical. I have no doubt that in a few years alcohol will no longer be administered as an internal medicine, but will take its proper place as an external remedy.

With regard to the value of alcohol in the treatment of disease, I regret to say that there is recorded no distinct series of observations made with what is known to be ethylic alcohol. Even Dr. Anstie, in his paper "On the Use of Alcohol in Acute Diseases," says :—"The question of the use of alcohol in acute disease is at present in a very curious position. . . . In regard to the administration of alcohol, we have arrived at a point where we are in want of indications to guide us in its use." Dr. Anstie suggests, as means for guiding the physician in the use of alcohol, the application of the thermometer, the sphygmograph, and chemical analysis. How a medical man, in extensive practice, could daily, and sometimes hourly, avail himself of these appliances, when administering alcohol, is a difficulty not easily surmounted. That by these means some of the effects produced by the introduction of alcohol into the body may be indicated, is true, but that they can show any necessity for its use, when we have other and more reliable drugs at command, is a doubt. The administration of alcohol by medical men is most usually in the form of brandy, wines, or beers ; but does the medical man, when ordering these intoxicating drinks, know what quantity and also what kind of alcohol he is prescribing for the use of his patient ? The public generally believe that there is but one kind of fluid known by the name of alcohol ; but chemistry teaches that there is a numerous series of alcohols, which differ very much in their intoxicating properties, according to the amount of carbon in their composition. Ethylic alcohol, known by the name of spirits of wine, is the product of the fermentation of certain kinds of sugar ; but in the manufacture of brandy from corn, potatoes, or the must of grapes, the ethyl alcohol is found accompanied with propylic, butylic, amylic, and other alcohols. These latter alcohols contain in their composition a large amount of carbon, are exceedingly intoxicating, the narcotic stage induced lasting for many hours, and even days, when exhibited to man or animals. A large quantity of potatoe spirit, or amylic alcohol, has been manufactured in Germany ; and the whisky of our Scotch distilleries contains also some portions of the same. I have seen a guinea-pig rendered insensibly intoxicated with ethylic alcohol in about an hour, and recovery from this stage did not take place for some hours afterwards. I have also seen a guinea-pig rendered insensibly intoxicated with amylic alcohol, which did not recover from this stage for some days, exemplifying truly the intoxicating properties of the different alcohols used. A patient of mine once got insensibly intoxicated with whisky purchased at a low public-house in the town. He did not thoroughly recover from this intoxication for nearly two days. I have not the least doubt but that he had been supplied with an impure article, considerably adulterated with the heavier alcohols. Such was the depressing and exhausting effect of this debauch upon my patient, that he has never tasted liquor of any kind since.

It is a matter of common observation how differently persons are affected by different qualities of wines and spirits, irrespective of quantity. The light ethylic alcohol of what is termed good (?) wine is comparatively harmless, and like the ethers, is rapidly eliminated from the system ; but wines containing the heavier alcohols are comparatively poisonous. Then on what grounds can the scientific physician order his patient to take daily quantities of rum, brandy, gin, or wines, obtained from publicans or dealers, when he can, without analysis, have no knowledge of that which is prescribed or the effects that will be produced? May not the promiscuous administration of these intoxicating drinks be pronounced to be highly empirical?

It has been asserted that if the casualties of heat and cold, of fatigue and excitement, to which all men are liable, do not constitute incipient disease, they approximate sufficiently to require the same remedies ; and that, under such conditions, the use of alcoholic liquors are necessary. I cannot coincide in the conclusion that heat and cold, fatigue and exercise, in the least degree approximate to diseased states, or require medical treatment. On the contrary, they are states as perfectly normal as sleeping and walking, and instead of drugs, require only diet, regimen, and rest. Rest and sleep are the antidotes to fatigue of body and mind, not ardent spirits. Fire and exercise are the antidotes to cold ; and if these do not suffice, the next best is good feeding, not bad drinking. It is a very unphysiological proceeding to stupefy the nerves that feel fatigue, which can only increase the mischief intended to be remedied.

HENRY BARBER. M.D., ULVERSTONE.

THE various preparations of alcohol publicly offered for sale have gained a reputation beyond what they really deserve, through the exaggerated ideas of ignorant people, who were educated in this faith by the past generation of doctors, and the fascinating nature of the compounds so much lauded for their health-giving qualities ; for, as "the appetite grows on what it feeds" in this particular instance more than in any other, we can easily understand the firm hold it has taken upon the minds and palates of all classes of society. Hence, one great and favourite plea generally put in at Brewster Sessions when an applicant desires a licence for a new locality, is that it is perhaps some little distance from another licensed victualler's, and the consequences might be serious to the neighbourhood if spirits could not be obtained on an emergency in as short a time as possible.

The fact is, these assumptions are nothing better than shameless effrontery and impudent quackery, though I cannot but charitably suppose the clergy and others who sign the petitions to the local bench of magistrates in favour of these houses, do it with the best motives.

It is time, therefore, they had their eyes opened. With crime, lunacy, preventible disease, pauperism, and premature death on the increase, it behoves us to look to reforms in this direction before our great country takes a downward course in the scale of nations ; for if ever Great Britain ran a risk of physical and mental degeneration, it does at this moment, standing upon the brink of a terrible abyss, beneath which is a slough of moral degradation, perplexing enough to our legislators and philanthropists, but not sufficiently appalling, it appears, to demand the immediate action of Parliament. I am ashamed to confess that in my humble opinion it is through the hasty, thoughtless, and indiscriminating recommendation of intoxicating drinks as beneficial remedies by the medical faculty, that the vice of drunkenness yearly acquires such an impulse. Many a cottage and many a homestead never had wine or spirits within its portals until ordered by the doctor. The head of the family will invest his hard savings as a sacred duty in the bottle of "red port" or "French brandy" for the poor suffering invalid, anxious to do all in his power for the sick one, and leave nothing undone for sad reflection afterwards. Where the friends of the sick person cannot find means to purchase the liquors, some benevolent lady or gentleman is appealed to, and seldom in vain. Again, different kinds of drinks have acquired somehow or other a special reputation for certain diseases—thus, rum is highly lauded for a cold, brandy for colic, sickness, or diarrhoea, gin or whisky for gravel, and Hollands gin for rheumatism. It is popularly supposed that port wine "makes blood quickly" where there has

been great loss of blood or heavy discharges from abscesses or the like ; that sherry has particular virtues, and champagne almost miraculous powers ! Malt liquor in every form is by the vulgar believed to increase the appetite, "get up the strength," and keep the system in a state of robust health. Many medical men acquiesce in these exploded notions respecting intoxicating liquors, and, instead of disapproving of their use, not only praise their patients for trying them, but advise their continuance.

It is a very common thing for a medical man to be told, on arriving at a house whither he has been summoned, that stimulants have been administered in one or other of their forms, as if the authority for their use in such cases was unquestionable, and they look for ready agreement to their promptitude and forethought.

The honest medical practitioner, whose convictions may lead him to follow the non-alcoholic treatment of disease, has to bear with the results of years of ignorance and prejudice, and he will be fortunate if he escape a large amount of spiteful misrepresentation on the part of his contemporaries and the drink-loving public. Such pleasant observations as the following are sure to be made and circulated freely in his neighbourhood. He is said to "let his patients down for want of proper nourishment," to keep them "too low," or if they die, which occasionally happens, he has "allowed them to slip through his fingers." Persons are advised not to consult him, as "he will be sure to stop the beer," or else "drench them" with "cold water," and, if not required professionally, he is not invited to many social gatherings for fear he should inflict upon them "a teetotal lecture."

A very strong notion prevails among most persons that any individual who has been accustomed to partake freely, or even in moderation, of alcoholic beverages for years, cannot desist from the practice suddenly without great danger to life. They suppose the process of weaning should in these cases be brought about gradually, if attempted at all ; but you generally find they recommend most positively, with a profound shake of the head (a favourite mode of impressing the credulous by empty pretenders) that entire abstinence from alcoholic liquors would be sure to cause the death of the person rash or foolish enough to risk such a thing. I knew an old gentleman who had reached the age of seventy-eight, and had been used to a fair amount of liquor every day for fifty years, and particularly during the last ten or fifteen he had enjoyed his glass rather freely. This old man began to show signs of failing health, and rapid approach of senile decay. His breathing became laboured, his head dizzy when walking, and his feet and legs swollen and inflamed with a low chronic form of erysipelas, threatening to end in varicose ulceration. I induced him to give up drinking, and, to my very great surprise, and the disgust of his old companions, who, like Job's comforters, tried to frighten him with their stupid and absurd forebodings, he kept his resolution firmly. At the end of the year I happened to meet with him, when he jocosely referred to the circumstance of my advising him to refrain from drink of this kind, and drew my attention to the fact that very soon after he had turned over his new leaf all his bad symptoms had vanished, and he was, to use his own expression, "as well as ever he was in his life," and had a better appetite than he had enjoyed for years. His legs were quite sound, his dizziness gone, and his breathing relieved. He had not taken a grain of medicine since he had abstained. Another year elapsed, and I was called to see my old friend. He had unfortunately narrowly escaped being run over by a carriage-and-pair, in consequence of his impaired sight ; but although the driver pulled up just in time to avoid touching him in the least, his nervous system received such a shock that he managed with difficulty to reach home, and gradually sank to his rest the day after his eightieth birthday, within forty-eight hours of his misadventure. His last hours were spent among his relatives, who were rejoiced by his perfect sensibility until a short time of his death, when he slept away so peacefully that it was difficult to tell when life ended and the last enemy took possession.

I have known abscesses keep discharging for weeks and months through the patient taking wine and malt liquor "to make up for the waste," when it was plain the use of the alcoholics fed the sore instead of healing it, actually encouraging the formation of pus.

I am led to reflect, after much experience in watching cases of this kind, includ-

ing deaths in hospital practice from pyæmia, that if, instead of the very liberal allowance of wine and other stimulants, the patients who undergo capital operations were kept upon simple diet and pure water, the superior surgical skill and good nursing, and admirably ventilated wards of our excellent infirmaries, would not be so frequently thwarted, as I fear is too often the case, by the administration of "hot and rebellious liquors," which in my humble opinion retard recovery by interfering with the healthy action of the healing process. Anyone who has seen the rapid progress of mortification and degeneration of structure in the bloated and shapeless masses of humanity, devotees of Bacchus, will be convinced that the Bardolphian character is by no means a subject likely to do credit to surgical skill. Champagne enjoys a wonderful renown for arresting obstinate vomiting under almost any circumstances. I have seen it fail miserably and completely, in many cases, when Dr. Chapman's ice-bags applied over the spine relieved like a charm, after this effervescing alcoholic compound brought nothing but disappointment.

I have known teetotalers keep gin in their houses, and take it whenever they have a little lumbago, to act upon the kidneys—conscientiously enough, I have no doubt, having perfect faith in its efficacy as a medicine. It is a very common thing to give brandy to the dying, even when it is certain there is no hope of restoration, and the patient is often plied with it to the last moment with a teaspoon, by the tearful attendant at the bedside.

Another popular fallacy is the idea that new milk, when combined with rum and taken early in the morning, possesses virtues far beyond new milk alone. This error has been fostered doubtless originally by medical men, or else the opinion, originating with some old toper who wanted a quiet excuse for a taste before breakfast, has been adopted by country practitioners, and gradually impressed upon the public as truth, until at the present day, if anyone be bold enough to dispute the fact of the mixture being so very extraordinary in its qualities as it is in its composition, he is convicted of rank heresy, and regarded as an uninstructed, pretentious practitioner, sadly in want of experience. I have no hesitation in exposing the utter absurdity of the belief in this compound—it is a wolf in sheep's clothing, and any good likely to accrue from its use as diet or medicine is derived from the milk alone. There are many adults who find great difficulty in taking milk, and it is possible, when the system requires this bland nutritious fluid, and is likely to be benefited by it, they are enabled to drink it with the addition of a little rum, while they could not have forced it down without, on the principle of giving a rhubarb powder to a child in a little jam, or a dose of cod-liver oil in orange wine. While deliberating upon this subject, and during an interruption in the preparation of this paper, a mere accident—a journey by rail and the purchase of a penny daily newspaper, the *Manchester Examiner and Times* of May 7th—threw in my way a case in point which will serve very well as an illustration of the danger lurking in this apparently harmless and much-vaunted remedy. The paper alluded to contained a report of an examination into certain charges of drunkenness preferred against the vicar of Haslingden, a married man with eleven children, by the churchwardens of the parish, before the Lord Bishop of Manchester and his legal assessor at the Ardwick Town Hall, on May 6th. Among the witnesses brought up by Mr. Serjeant Parry for the defendant, was his medical attendant, who stated he had known the defendant eighteen years, and had been the medical attendant of the family for two years. Defendant being in a weak and nervous state, witness had sanctioned the prescription of rum-and-milk. At the same time he was prescribing it to defendant's daughter who was liable to consumption. He approved of it, as it "strengthened and fattened." Any old woman is aware of the transcendent nutritious properties of milk, but to assert that the introduction of a fiery sample of alcohol into this honest, innocent, useful liquid, heightens its value as food, or increases its nourishing powers, is a libel on one of nature's best and most valuable contributions to the diet of man.

The use of fermented liquors by nursing mothers has been advocated as being absolutely necessary for the purpose of giving strength and *making milk*. No popular fallacy ever received such a death-blow at the hands of advancing science as this one, for, as Dr. Lees observes, "Amongst all the exceptionable pleas for alcohol, that which alleges its benefits in *nursing*, either for mother or child, is the

most utterly groundless. The plain fact is that, if alcoholics are drunk by mothers, the alcohol goes into the milk, and so is given to the child indirectly, and the effects are all the same. It never improves the *quality* of the milk, but makes it more watery, with less casein or nutriment, and even less oil, as analysis has often demonstrated."

I am aware of many instances where the diet of the peasantry is remarkable for the absence of butchers' meat, and where the women, as a rule, never take malt liquor, or that vile compound sold in roadside inns, in out-of-the-way places, called *ale*. These women have generally an abundance of milk, nurse their children in many cases for two years, and rarely suffer from debility in consequence. I have seen instances where all the symptoms of over-lactation were conspicuous—headache, giddiness, langour, loss of appetite, and general prostration, milk scanty and poor—derive great benefit *without* malt liquor, and continue to nurse without difficulty. In one case, with malt liquors and wine, the patient was unable to retain the milk more than a few weeks, so as to give the breast *occasionally*, depending chiefly on the feeding-bottle, during the rearing of a large family, yet subsequently had no difficulty, after a greater attention to her own diet, and there was a plentiful supply of milk for several months, almost sufficient for the entire wants of the child, and no symptoms of debility on the part of the mother; on the contrary, such was the remarkable effect of the diet in this case, that the mother greatly increased in weight, over and above what she ever was in her life before. The secret was in substituting *milk* for beer or porter. This patient took as much as two quarts a day. Generally speaking, adults do not find milk altogether suitable, unless made up in the form of puddings, but during lactation it will be found that there are very few women who cannot take it with advantage, feeling no inconvenience whatever, but soon discovering that a glass of milk occasionally, or a cup of chocolate, during the day, between meals, seems to revive more substantially than the ale used to do.

In a well-marked case of extreme debility, in a young strumous subject (who had been brought up an abstainer), after suckling her child for four or five months, a liberal allowance of food, and very little tonic medicine, soon effected a restoration. Other cases can be mentioned of thin, spare women, who are hard-working and energetic, and yet have abundance of milk; but they drink large quantities of cows' milk, and declare that they find milk as a beverage, infinitely more sustaining than malt liquor.

In reading over the ancient proverbs of the Talmud, I was very much struck with one, which for pith and depth of meaning is not to be excelled by any of the numerous national sayings in the world. It was this: "When the devil cannot go himself, he sends wine as his messenger." In this way the Evil One contrives to enter the palace and the hovel, and even the church is not free from his *uncanny* influence.

Shakespeare, with the powerful grasp of his marvellous intellect, gives expression to a similar thought when he says: "Oh, thou invisible spirit of wine, if thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee Devil."

The ancient Greeks, according to Herodotus, in order to render powerless a conquered country, and make it easy to retain, used to encourage and even establish wine-shops in great abundance, so that the inhabitants might degrade themselves and debase their nature by sottish indulgence, quenching the patriotic fire in the wine cup. Thus did Babylon—the magnificent, the mighty—fall, "never to rise again."

When I think of the part the medical profession has played in the history of popular alcoholic medication, in the unenlightened, reckless, promiscuous, and even wilful prescription of intoxicants, I bring to mind the remarkable words of the late Dr. Cheyne, of Dublin, physician to the forces:—"The benefits which have been supposed from their liberal use in medicine, and especially in those diseases which were once universally and are still vulgarly supposed to depend upon mere weakness, have invested these agents with attributes to which they have no claim, and hence, as we physicians no longer employ them as we were wont to do, we ought not to rest satisfied with the mere acknowledgment of error, but we ought also to make every reparation in our power for having so long upheld one of the most fatal delusions that ever took possession of the human mind." In

conclusion, I hope the day is not far distant when the members of the noble art of healing will rouse themselves to a sense of their duty, and hasten to repair the vast amount of moral and physical mischief they have wrought in the world during the last fifty years in this one direction.

JAMES EDMUNDS, M.D., LONDON.

DR. EDMUNDS had prepared no paper, but after remarking that he was present rather with the object of hearing other medical men, than of speaking or reading himself, said that he could not but obey the call of the Chairman, and make a short statement relevant to the business of the meeting—*i.e.*, the detailing of facts with regard to the personal and the professional experience of medical men. Dr. Edmunds continued as follows:—My personal experience is this: Some twenty years ago, when a medical student, I was taught physiology by Dr. Carpenter, the author of the celebrated work, “The Use and Abuse of Alcohol,” and through the mere accident of coming into contact with him, I became interested in this subject and read his book. That book furnished me with facts, the logical conclusions of which worked themselves out in my mind, and fortified me against drink freely when I was out in society, or when obliged to work unusually hard. My convictions were not stronger for some time further, and I went on treating my patients in the way in which I had been taught to treat them by the teachers under whom I was studying. They taught me that when a patient was low, it was necessary to order him wine, beer, or spirits. When the patient was a total abstainer, I thought it was my duty to seduce him from it, as being a crotchety man who was doing himself harm, by not taking in moderation that which was a good creature of God. During this time, in my personal habits, I was extremely moderate, often taking no alcoholic beverage. Subsequently I heard Mr. Gough, and he produced a deep impression upon the emotional part of my mind. Afterwards I was induced to take the chair at a temperance meeting, and opened the meeting by carefully dissociating myself from teetotalism, but I soon found arguments forced upon me that made me feel uncomfortable, and that it was difficult to shake off. These arguments had an effect upon my sense of duty, and ran side by side with facts and arguments which had influenced my mind years before. The result of these two influences was that I became anxious as a medical man to test more carefully the influence which alcohol has upon the sick, and to observe more carefully its influence upon myself and upon persons in health. My observations soon brought me to the conclusion that my patients recovered far better after I discontinued the habit of prescribing large quantities of alcohol than they had done before, and I went on, until some four or five years ago I came definitely to the conclusion that even cases of typhus fever, delirium tremens, and other diseases in which it was held that alcohol was especially beneficial, did far better when treated without it. In my own personal habits I abstained for three months at a time from wine, beer, and spirits, and then for another three months I would take a glass of wine with dinner, and so on alternately, carefully estimating in my own self the effect which each course had, and I arrived at this conviction: that I had better health, and could do more work, and enjoyed life better, as an abstainer, than when I took wine, beer, or spirits. For four years I have not tasted alcoholic liquors, and, as far as I can judge of my intentions, I mean never to taste them again. With regard to my partner in life, I can state some facts for the guidance of nursing mothers. My wife has had five children, and has done her duty to them very thoroughly, having nursed each child for about twelve months. She commenced by nursing them without alcoholic beverages, although not a pledged abstainer. I remember a medical friend calling to see her one day, and he said, “You may do this for once or twice, but after that”—well, he made all kinds of terrible predictions. Happily she was not influenced by what he said; and now, though seven or eight years have elapsed since that interview, and she has nursed several other children, her convictions are stronger than ever, and she believes that she and her children owe a great deal to her entire abstinence from alcoholic liquors. I have not picked out these facts as a mere advocate, but I have selected them, as representing fairly a large mass of results in my public and private practice, that forms the basis of

the convictions which experience and investigation have led me to entertain, and which I never shrink from stating in the sick room and in public on all proper occasions. Let me, in the next place, observe that professional men of all orders, if they are dependent upon their profession for support, must be the mere reflex of the public opinion of the period. I find that if I am not extremely careful in this matter my influence is paralysed, and my own professional prospects are damaged, whilst my duty to my family is not discharged because I lose patients in consequence of not prescribing for them large quantities of wine, beer, and spirits. I think when temperance reformers are condemning the profession, that that ought to be borne in mind. Then, again, with our ministers, and especially Dissenting ministers, we should remember that they are dependent upon the will and general approval of the congregations for whom they minister, and we cannot expect them to be entirely at variance with the opinions of the persons composing them, no more than we can expect the same from our medical men. I have a letter from a medical friend, who has often written to me for advice on these points, and which I have obtained his permission to read. I must withhold his name, although I am prepared to give it in confidence to any of the gentlemen on the platform. The letter illustrates one of the points on which I have been speaking :—

“ May 10, 1869.

“ My dear Sir,—I should very much like to be present at the Medical Conference of the Temperance League on the 25th inst. and read a paper. I have prepared one, but on seriously reflecting upon the matter, I am forced to the conclusion that I must decline the invitation and stay at home. The fact is, I cannot afford any more to make my opinions publicly known while I am in practice here. It is useless attempting to live down the prejudice existing in this place. It is too deep-rooted for me ever to overcome. There are not many teetotalers here, so they can't support a doctor among them. This town has a peculiar history in a medical point of view. Within the memory of any living man, there has never been a sober doctor but one, and he was obliged to leave the place after holding out for ten years. I find I am getting on worse and worse since I became an abstainer, and tried to be consistent. Last year my receipts were £300 less than the previous year, and this year will show a still further reduction. What with the prejudice against me on that account, and because I try to keep myself respectable, the drink ramifications oppose me, and I shall probably have to dispose of my practice and quit the place, though I like it for many reasons and associations. If I could get a resident patient or two who would pay me well, I could hold out, and beat them, but I have four children growing up, and they must be provided for.”

That (continued Dr. Edmunds) is a fair representation of what those medical men have to deal with who have come to logical conclusions on this matter, and are trying to be consistent—“the wife and children have to be provided for,” and that takes the heart out of the man. I could detail facts from my own recent experience in connection with a London hospital, where for twelve months while I was in sole charge as senior physician, the wine, beer, and spirits, cost a few shillings, as against a large number of pounds for the twelve months previous to that in which I had charge. My non-alcoholic treatment raised a great prejudice amongst the brewers and distillers who were governors of the hospital, and mischievous people were encouraged to make complaints against me. Among these people were servants, moved by the fear of reforms and enforced economy in their administration, also a gentleman whom I need not name, and dissatisfaction was easily excited amongst a few tippling patients, who soon became loud in their complaints because they were not allowed an unlimited amount of alcoholic liquors. The amount of animus and misrepresentation aroused in this way was such, that it was simply impossible, with any comfort to myself, to continue the duties devolving upon me there, and in consequence a short time ago I resigned. Statements were insidiously circulated in connection with my relationship to that hospital which would have irremediably damaged my professional reputation, had it not been that all the best men on the board of management left the hospital as a protest against this miserable persecution. Of course it was perfectly competent for religious brewers and distillers among the governors to object to me because of my views on the use of alcoholics. But

instead of honestly raising that question, they united with mischievous people and attempted to damage my character, in order to get rid of me by a side wind. These circumstances illustrate the silent depth and power of vested interests and drinking prejudices on this subject, and I mention them in extenuation of what might otherwise be thought the wilful administration of alcoholic stimulants by the medical profession. I would endorse every word of what has fallen from the gentlemen who have preceded me. If there is one thing above another upon which it seems to me that there are not two sides, it is the proposition which underlies the temperance reformation—that wine, beer, and spirits are an unmitigated curse to mankind, that they have, or ought to have, only a place on the shelves of the chemist, beside the bottles holding laudanum, arsenic, strychnine, or any other drug, useful while we hold that any drugs are useful in the treatment of disease, but to be thrown away when the time comes for us to live according to law, and supersede the use of drugs.

The hospital to which reference has been made above is the British Lying-in Hospital, Endell Street, London, W.C.

The following table shows the rate of mortality for the five years ending Feb. 28, 1868, when a large quantity of alcoholic liquors were used :—

BRITISH LYING-IN HOSPITAL.—INDOOR PATIENTS.

Statistics for Five Years, ending Feb. 28, 1869.

Date.	Total Deliveries.	Maternal Deaths.	Children's Deaths.		
			Totals.	Born Dead.	Born Alive.
1863, Mar., to Dec. 31	120	1	7	3	4
1864, Jan., to „	200	0	15	10	5
1865 „ „	232	5	21	10	11
1866 „ „	192	4	29	8	21
1867 „ „	290	7	24	13	11
1868 „ to Feb. 28	12	1	2	2	0
Totals.....	1,046	18	98	46	52
Ratios	—	1 in 58	1 in 10 $\frac{2}{3}$	1 in 23	1 in 20

During the next year, March 1, 1868, to February 28, 1869, inclusive, the hospital was under the sole charge of Dr. Edmunds, and only a few shillings were expended upon alcoholics.

The results were as follows :—

Total Deliveries.	Maternal Deaths.	Children's Deaths.		
		Totals.	Born Dead.	Born Alive.
167	1	8	6	2

The single maternal death here recorded occurred in a poor woman who entered the hospital in an advanced state of consumption, and having passed safely through her delivery, died on the eleventh day afterwards. Of the two deaths among the live-born children, one was due to congenital absence of the brain, the child dying on the third day. Yet, counting these deaths, the mortality for the preceding five years had been three times as great among the mothers, and four times as great among the live-born children ; while during the twelve months immediately preceding there had been 259 deliveries, with eight deaths among the mothers and ten deaths among the live-born children—a disproportion very much more startling.

These figures were investigated very carefully, in consequence of the various

statements that were put into circulation, as to Dr. Edmunds having injured the patients by depriving them of stimulants, and afterwards in order to account for the small mortality it was alleged that the patients had been sent out earlier, so as to lessen the death-risk within the hospital. To meet this allegation, the numbers of days' stay in the hospital were abstracted for every patient for two years—*i.e.*, the twelve months while Dr. Edmunds was in charge, and the twelve months immediately preceding. The results were as follows :—The 167 patients under Dr. Edmunds's charge were in the hospital a total of 2,974 days, or an average term of *eighteen* days each ; while the 259 patients of the previous twelve months were in the hospital a total of 4,147 days, or an average term of *sixteen* days each.

As these statistics were subsequently annexed to the report of the retiring board of management, and after having been printed and circulated to all the governors, were adopted *nem. con.* in the presence of the objectors, they are entitled to be put upon record as a reliable instalment of facts representing the results of non-alcoholic treatment.

ROBERT MARTIN, M.D., WARRINGTON.

WHEN I was asked to furnish a paper to the medical conference in connection with the meeting of the National Temperance League, it occurred to me that, whilst it is extremely important to show how successfully we are able, in the vast majority of cases, to treat disease without the use of alcohol, it would at the same time be instructive to show how potent an agent alcohol is in promoting disease.

Such a demonstration is the more needed, because professed sanitarians have apparently, with remarkable unanimity, virtually agreed to ignore the effects of intemperance as a factor in the production of disease. Yet there can be little question that drinking and drunkenness tend more than anything else to foster the conditions which are not only favourable, but essential, to the outbreak of typhus, cholera, &c.

The drunkard not only injures his own constitution, but he gives an injured constitution to his children. Whilst he has to suffer at times from cold and hunger, his wife and family not only suffer from these debilitating causes, but from anxiety and cruelty also. It is not merely that the drunkard's dwelling is, as a rule, a mere den, but it is almost invariably placed in the most unhealthy situation. It is not merely that food is scanty, but it is often of the vilest description. Not only does the family suffer from want of clothing to defend the body against cold, but, lacking necessary change, their rags are generally in a filthy condition. For want of ablutionary convenience, there is a lack of personal cleanliness ; for want of room, there is chronic overcrowding. Even where the dwelling is sufficiently convenient, yet during cold weather, owing to want of bed-clothing, it frequently happens that the different members of the family huddle together, windows and doors are closed, holes and crevices are stuffed, so that the pent-up atmosphere reeks with poisons of the foulest kind. No sanitarian will deny that where such conditions as these are found, there we have all the predisposing conditions most favourable to the outbreak of epidemic disease. Let but a spark fall in the midst of such highly combustible material, let the germs of cholera, typhus, scarlatina, or diphtheria be introduced into such a hotbed, and the results are frightful.

In 1861-2 there was an enormous increase of places for the sale of liquor in Liverpool, and a corresponding increase in drunkenness. At the same time, trade was very bad, so that there was a fearful amount of destitution. Typhus burst forth, and for four years raged as an epidemic. In 1866 the magistrates, seeing the terrible blunder which had been made, reversed their policy, put an end to the experiment which they prepared the public for in 1861, and put in force in 1862 ; from the greatest laxity they swung round to the most rigid control. The result was that the death-rate, which had been going up year after year, was suddenly arrested. Intemperance was diminished, and disease and death diminished also. Liverpool lost, or rather escaped from, the terrible pre-eminence which for years it had maintained on the Registrar-General's black list. Never, perhaps, was there a more striking instance showing the connection of intemperance with the

outbreak of epidemic disease than occurred in Liverpool in connection with the outbreak of cholera in July, 1866. The first case amongst the settled population occurred in the most drunken part of Liverpool. The victim was an Irishwoman; her death occurred on Sunday night, July 1, 1866, and the body was waked amidst a scene of shocking drunkenness until Tuesday. Dr. Trench, the medical officer of health, visited the scene on the Monday, and found the corpse surrounded by persons who were indulging in "drunken and profane ribaldry." He says:—"When I again visited on Tuesday morning, to try either by threats or persuasions to hasten the funeral, I found the whole place reeking with tobacco smoke, and with the loathsome and disgusting emanations of drunken and unwashed bacchanals. The three houses (in the court) were crammed with men, women, and children, while drunken women squatted thickly on the flags before the open door of the crowded room where the corpse lay. . . . Before the period of a week had passed, John Boyle, the husband of the woman, was also amongst the dead, and before the end of July forty-eight persons had died from cholera within a radius of 150 yards from the court which had been the scene of the ill-timed revelry. The commencement of the epidemic dates from the period and place of Mrs. Boyle's death."

The next death, after the Boyles', was that of Martin Hanlon. We learn that drinking took place at his funeral, and John Kilcurse, who was present, afterwards died of cholera. Hanlon died on the 4th. The next day, Mrs. Finney, who had been drinking hard at Mrs. Boyle's wake, also died. In the case of another victim, we read:—"The corpse of McAnnally had to be removed by the authorities with force, while men and women, in maudlin and frantic drunkenness, clung to it, and howled, and blasphemed, and wept."

I have said that all this occurred in a drunken neighbourhood, and I make the statement on the following authority. Mr. Worsnop told the Sub-Mortality Committee, on May 12th of the same year, that he met a brewer, "and asked him his impression of the neighbourhood." The reply was, "All I can tell you, though it is against myself, is, that drink is the curse of the neighbourhood." Mr. Worsnop, speaking of the habits of the people of this very district, says:—"There is a large number of men on the block I have been alluding to . . . who would not work six days. They would leave a shop sooner than do that. They are men who will only just go to work as it suits their convenience, and drink the rest of the time. They receive their money daily, and they go and spend it, and as soon as it is spent, and the fumes of the drink have passed off, they go again to work."

In glancing at the agencies associated with the cholera epidemic of 1864, Dr. Trench thus speaks of drunkenness:—"The results of intemperance, its maddening excitement, and subsequent nervous collapse, are favourable to the inroads of cholera. During the one, reckless incaution subjects the victim to all the risks of contagion; during the other, debility makes him a ready recipient of the poison."

Now, would it be credited that, after this positive declaration, and after the graphic descriptions and specific details given in connection with the case of Mrs. Boyle, the first victim, and those which immediately followed, the doctor declares that, "Though convinced, in my own mind, that drunkenness was a prominent and manifest adjunct of the disease, I am unable to adduce any reliable facts in support of the fact"? It is said that none are so blind as those who won't see, and Dr. Trench has long been regarded as one of those sanitarians who put the telescope to the blind eye when drunkenness is pointed to. The facts are most convincing to an unprejudiced and intelligent mind. The neighbourhood where this outbreak took place is characterised by overcrowding, squalor and dirt, not because of unavoidable poverty, but through drunken idleness and reckless waste. It is deeply to be regretted that sanitary reformers will continue to ignore the terrible extent to which their efforts are neutralised by drink. Until they are willing to do this, they must undergo the punishment of Sisyphus. Just as the task is about to be completed, their scheme collapses, failure ensues.

On the other hand, where a sudden and extensive increase in the sobriety of a people occurs, a vast improvement may take place in the people's health without

any sanitary change of a structural kind. This was remarkably shown at Edinburgh in 1854 after the closing of public-houses on Sunday and late at night came into operation. Typhus fever, which had raged for years, underwent an immediate decrease.

It is thus, I think, beyond all question that intemperance is one of the most potent factors in the production of epidemic disease.

R. L. BAYLEY, M.R.C.S., STOURBRIDGE.

IN compliance with a request of the National Temperance League, I have pleasure in affording to this conference a short epitome of my experience as a medical practitioner upon the temperance question, and the employment of alcoholic liquors in the treatment of disease.

The shortness of the notice given to me for any preparation for a paper for this meeting, together with the fact of my having hard and laborious duties to perform as a country medical man, in a densely populated district, from which I can neither snatch the time nor opportunity for much writing or thought, must be my excuse for imperfections and plainness which will be patent to all. I can only make a simple and brief statement, and add my mite to the testimony of others more gifted in tongue and pen, who have gone before me, and borne witness both to the benefits of personal abstinence and the pressing, nay, even positive advantage, of treating disease almost entirely without the use of alcoholic poisons. If I have done anything, or hereafter shall do anything, towards advancing the great and glorious cause which we meet here to-day to advocate, I shall be more than compensated for any trouble that I may have taken. I have, and can only have in this matter, one object in view, the welfare of my fellow-men. No selfish object can urge me on in this course. I have no interested motive to serve; I desire solely to testify of the truth, and that positively against my own interest; for a medical man who advocates the principles of total abstinence must in a great degree contribute to his own downfall both in reputation with the world and in the diminution of diseases upon which he lives. Nevertheless, he must take the most philosophical view of the subject, and regard our highest and most holy functions as being in the *prevention* rather than in the *cure* of the disease. That a very large proportion of the maladies which occur in every-day life may be prevented by the practice of total abstinence from all intoxicating liquors there cannot be the shadow of a doubt; but our world and our society are so unfortunately constituted in the present day, that the man who would by his wisdom and knowledge teach people to prevent disease is unheeded and uncared for, whilst the physician who can cure is readily courted. To remove in a few hours or in a few days the natural result of the systematic abuse of man's body for years is the requirement of the medical men in the present day. Any higher function by the great mass of people is uncared for.

PERSONAL TESTIMONY.—I have been engaged in general medical and surgical practice in various parts of England for the past twelve years, since my pupilage at the London Hospital in 1857, during eight years of which time I have been a total abstainer from all forms of alcoholic drinks. I have been a hard worker during the whole of my life, working often night and day, going through all forms of fatigue, coming home and going out at all hours of the night, yet I never once felt the want or necessity of one drop of alcoholic fluid. I have invariably found nature's restoratives—sleep, food, rest—amply sufficient to recruit my energies. After a good night's sleep, my cold bath, and a good breakfast, I have always found my energies fresh again, and my physical condition renewed with almost the strength and elasticity of steel. So convinced am I of the superiority of the total abstinence plan, under conditions of prolonged bodily fatigue, that nothing would possibly ever induce me again to begin the use of alcoholic poisons. Nor am I bigoted or fanatical in these my views. They are the result of years of careful study, much thought, and a good deal of practical experience. After carefully reading the excellent literature of the past few years upon the temperance question, and the miserable attempts at argument on the other side, I can come to no other conclusion than that every form of alcoholic liquor is bad, that it is totally unnecessary in any condition of health, that it is a treacherous and dangerous remedy in

disease, and that, to say the least, it may be almost banished from the practice of medicine, or reduced eighty or ninety per cent. from its present employment. During the eight years last past I have travelled on foot a distance of over 20,000 miles, on rough and hilly roads, and yet I am now unimpaired in energy, save by increasing age. Certainly I owe no debt of gratitude to the wine or spirit merchant, and yet I was educated in the belief that alcoholic liquors were absolutely necessary in every form of health and disease. Examples surrounded me on every side. Every one of my acquaintances drank, and drank, too, with all the ardour of blind devotees. I have to thank the writings of Dr. Carpenter for first calling my attention to the subject of alcohol.

ALCOHOL IN DISEASE.—Here is the prolific ground upon which all our opponents have sprung without limit, and the source from which the greatest obstacles have arisen to the temperance movement. Every drinker ashamed of his habits has some medical excuse, the advice or the recommendation of Dr. or Mr. So-and-so. The prescription when it suits the depraved taste of the patient is taken as food for the rest of his life, and so the unhappy drinker deliberately brings on diseased kidneys, cirrhosis of his liver, apoplexy, or fatty degeneration, which he would give the world to have cured, whilst he soothes his conscience with the miserable mockery of a medical prescription perhaps fifteen, twenty, or thirty years ago. Well may it be said that we

“ Run our necks into a noose,
We'd break them after to get loose.”

But to return to our point—the treatment of disease without alcohol. Here we have a grand truth which only awaits recognition at the hands of our profession. I feel sure that we are destined before long to see an entire revolution in the treatment of disease by alcohol. Already there is perceptible diminution of its use in one or two quarters, which augurs well for the future. We require more light upon this subject, and extended experience. So far as my own testimony goes, and I may say that it accords with others, I have treated successfully nearly every form of disease without alcohol, and with the best results for years. Time would fail here to enter into particulars; suffice it that we should be contented with a general result. So pleased am I with the success of the plan, that I should be sorry to go back to the use of alcohol. People, I am sure, get better without it, in many of the cases in which it has been stated to be absolutely necessary, whilst the physician is left with a clear conscience, and has afterwards the pleasing recollection of not having thrown a stumbling-block in his brother's way.

A sterling truth is often forgotten in the treatment of disease—viz., that in every animal body *nutrition is the only source of power*; and Herbert Spencer, too, throws out another equally true—viz., that whatever amount of force is evoked from the animal organism, is but the representative of something previously put into the shape of nutrition. It appears to me that these simple truths cut away much of the foundation upon which the use of alcohol has been justified. Formerly alcohol was used upon the erroneous notion of its nutritive power. This is no longer tenable, since it has been proved that it possesses none. More lately its stimulating action is the justification for its use, and yet with this property (if admitted) in its larger doses is allied a deadly and dangerous narcotic, which, if pushed far enough, is capable of causing death. The vital and natural stimuli—*air, food, rest, sleep*, in occasional combination with the various forms of ammonia, are, in my opinion, amply sufficient and less dangerous in conditions of temporary and permanent exhaustion than alcohol, and may be used in the majority of cases in which alcohol has been considered essential.

As nutrition, then, is the only source of power, which an all-wise Providence has placed in our hands for the repair and rejuvenescence of an ever-dying body, so then should we ever endeavour to repair it in times of temporary danger. Nutrients with the vital stimuli will generally succeed, whilst we shall be very near the truth if we regard the action of alcohol in the very opposite way to the popular notion. 1, instead of strengthening it weakens; 2, instead of nourishing it poisons; 3, instead of stimulating it narcotises. The first action is to anyone susceptible of ocular demonstration. The strength of the strongest man may be

taken away in a very short period, in the very inverse ratio to the alcohol imbibed. An hour or two ago he was able almost to remove a mountain, now he cannot sustain his own weight.

It would be vain to enter into the discussion of the non-nutritious power of alcohol, since it is so generally admitted ; and of its narcotic action we have no plainer or more homely illustration than we meet with every day in the streets of our metropolis and large towns.

In times of temporary danger and illness, when we are on the verge of death, we need food and stimuli which shall *sustain* force, not those which, like alcohol, merely call it forth and prematurely exhaust it. The subject is a great and glorious one, and deserves every consideration by the members of our calling, who, whilst pursuing their mission of peace and love amongst the sons and daughters of men, might add to the lustre of their work, and add additional laurels to their crowns, by availing themselves of the many opportunities presented to them of aiding the Temperance work of arresting the innumerable mental and physical wrecks which they must daily and hourly see, and, thus, in some measure, doing something to stem the tide of sin and death which are ever increasing upon us.

E. C. MAY, F.R.C.S., TOTTENHAM.

IT is now more than fifty-two years since I commenced my studies at Bartholomew's Hospital, where I was occupied about two and a half years, and the latter half I was a dresser, which gave me large opportunities of investigating the causes of disease, and the almost hopelessness of treatment in many cases in which the patients had largely indulged in the drinking habits of the country. In some of these instances the patients had not been considered as drunkards—they were always drinking, never drunk ; and here I must just allude to one case as an illustration, which occurred soon after I commenced private practice in Tottenham. A neatly-dressed carpenter came to me one morning, one whom I had often seen with his nice white apron going to his work with slow pace and downcast look. He put out his tongue at my request ; the tremor of it told at once a sad tale. I said I would call on him the next day, as he must not stir from home. He came, however. I insisted on his going home at once and to bed, and I believe I did all I possibly could for his restoration, but in three days he was no more. I then learned for the first time that he spent from 25s. to 30s. per week in drink, allowing his dear Christian wife only about 5s. for housekeeping, rent, &c., and this she supplemented by keeping a day-school. But I will not occupy time in relating what I have seen of delirium tremens, suicides, the extinguishing of all natural affection, and, worst and saddest of all, the voluntary silencing of the voice of God in the conscience, that the poor dupes of the "god of this world" might perpetrate some horrid deed, or pursue that licentious and criminal course which "He who came to seek and to save that which was lost" was pleading with them to abandon. It is a source of great satisfaction to me to know that there are now many men of great eminence in our profession who are beginning to see that very erroneous views have of late years been inculcated as to the necessity of stimulating drinks in many forms of disease ; and I do not hesitate to say that I have witnessed instances in which I fully believe the enormous potations of brandy and wine prescribed on high authority have tended to hurry on the disease to a fatal termination. I have even known large quantities of brandy ordered where in my apprehension gruel and barley-water, with a little wine, would have been far more beneficial. I would observe that I am not a pledged abstainer, but I have often thought that were the art of distilling entirely lost, it would be the greatest boon imaginable to society at large. Although I have been led to adopt these strong views, yet I do not wish to judge my brethren harshly. I remember that that great and good man, Dr. Fothergill, obtained great celebrity by his treatment of dyspepsia, and that one part of his treatment consisted in ordering with dinner a tablespoonful of brandy in a tumbler of water. I for some time pursued his plan ; but year after year the conviction was forced upon me that it was an unsafe plan. Its first effect was highly satisfactory and very creditable, but after a while I dared not pursue the plan unless I knew my patient to be possessed of much moral firmness, so often did it lead to increasing

the *remedy* as eventually to end in manifest intemperance. And here I may allude to one most instructive case which caused me an amount of distress which I cannot describe. An influential person was placed under my care by an old and experienced surgeon. A plan of treatment was laid down, such as Dr. Fothergill would have sanctioned. The patient improved, but the remedy was continued. The patient thought the brandy was not so good as it used to be, and took more and more. In the course of time she ceased to be under my care, but I was again required to attend in consultation with a physician, and hoped we should work pleasantly together. By this time the poor sufferer had been led, in addition to the stimulants, into that dreadful snare of the nightly use of opiates. I used my influence in vain to get rid of both, and, not being able, I withdrew from the case. However, matters grew worse, and I was again entreated to take charge of the poor sufferer, with a *carte blanche* as to treatment. I must now state that in former days I had found my patient's conversation of quite a religious and instructive character, but now all was changed, and a serious word was repelled by the query, "Can't you get rid of this dreadful sinking?" "Can't you give me some rest at night?" The state of the mind and body was most pitiable. I recommenced my attendance by saying I could only undertake it on one condition, that brandy should be entirely and at once discontinued, and opiates by degrees. I knew my patient, who was really a religious person, had been unwittingly led into this sad condition, and that I, by sanctioning the little in days past, had helped to do the mischief. This induced me to confess my fault, and to express my belief that by seeking help from above she would be enabled to surmount the cause of her misery. She did so, and in three or four days the distress became less severe. She became a total abstainer, gradually discontinued her opiate, and a sweet serenity of mind and enjoyment of Christian conversation was restored. She, in fact, became in her "right mind," and remained so for about two years, when she died in a good old age, a bright example of submission to the Divine will under a very suffering malady.

With experience such as I have narrated before me, and which I could multiply a hundredfold, it is not to be wondered at that I have myself become a total abstainer. I have been so for about six years, not only with no disadvantage, but I think with benefit to my general health and strength, as I can now in my 73rd year walk farther without fatigue than when I began to abstain.

I have no hesitation in saying that I believe there are very few persons who would not enjoy better health and more equable spirits if they had courage enough to try abstinence for a month. For the most part the simile holds good, that stimulants to the animal frame are like the spur to the horse—he goes for a while more gaily, but he drops the sooner; and many a man who thus excites himself to some great effort of mind or body has to pay dearly for the help by a season of nervous depression, or if not fortified by religion, he takes more and more till his friends are ashamed of him; and who is there that cannot look around him and number some who might have been bright ornaments in society, but from this cause their life has been a failure, not only affecting but awful?

I would say to the man of the world, Ponder these things, observe the dreadful effects, as recorded in almost every newspaper, of a voluntary surrender of reason. The evils cannot be enumerated; for every evil thought is excited, every dreadful crime perpetrated, under the influence of drink. But what shall I say to the professors of the religion of Christ, of Him who says, "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me." Does not every one desirous of taking this sacred counsel find it at times very hard to do so? and such will assuredly find it still more difficult to suppress an improper thought when only slightly elevated by the social glass.

When we consider the smallness of the privation to the moderate drinker and the mighty mischief of his example, may we not ask him on the score of philanthropy to abandon the little indulgence?

In concluding these few remarks, I would observe that although there are in our profession many men whom I highly value, yet I feel compelled to differ from them on this point. I do not say there are not cases in which these things are really useful. A sudden attack of faintness may occur when no better stimulant can be obtained, and nothing so ready to hand as brandy; a youth may be

making rapid growth with failing appetite, in which case I have known malt liquor of great use. But I cannot enter into particulars at this time, and I would say to all my friends who may have a little scruple as to the habitual use of stimulant, consult your conscience in the matter, not your physician, and I feel sure you will have your reward.

J. P. SCATLIFF, M.D., LONDON.

IT is now generally admitted that alcoholic beverages are wholly unnecessary for persons in health, seeing that 2000 medical practitioners, many of them the most eminent in their profession, including the late Sir Benjamin Brodie, Sir James M'Grigor, Sir William Fergusson, Sir James Clark, Sir William Burnett, Sir Henry Holland, Professor W. B. Carpenter, Sir John Forbes, Dr. F. Bird, Professor C. J. B. Williams, Dr. Arthur Farre, Professor W. A. Guy, Dr. Forbes Winslow, &c., have signed a declaration to the effect that a large portion of the disease existing in this country is induced by the use of alcoholic or fermented liquors as beverages. The fact that they are often needless, and frequently even injurious, in disease, is supported by the recently published statistics of the treatment of typhus fever, by Dr. Gairdner, of the Hospital of Glasgow ; unnecessary in the treatment of carbuncle, by Mr. Paget, of St. Bartholomew's Hospital ; and of no service in many other diseases, by the recently published clinical lecture to the medical students, by Dr. Wilks, Physician to Guy's Hospital, on alcoholic stimulants in disease, where, after condemning their use in organic diseases, as of the liver, heart, and nervous system, and illustrating their bad effects in bronchitis, pneumonia, delirium tremens, &c., he refers to an example belonging to a class of cases constantly met with in practice, where some of the symptoms of dyspepsia are present, which case is so important that I give it in the Doctor's own words :—

“It is not only in these severe cases of disease, but in lesser troubles, that your recommendation of stimulants may do incalculable mischief. You visit, for example, an ailing lady, and she details a number of troubles of a nervous and dyspeptic character. She is sitting indoors all day, taking no exercise, living well, and consequently drifting into a weak and flabby condition. You place your hand on her pulse, and, finding it feeble, condole with her on her state of health, assure her that she does not live well enough, and order a few extra glasses of wine or a little brandy. You find that she grows no better for the advice ; but perhaps you never reflect that you have been adding fuel to the fire. Knowing not what to do in the way of treatment, you order her out of town, and she immediately begins to improve. She goes to Brighton, rides on horseback, or walks miles a day on the Parade, regains her appetite, craves less for stimulants, and her health is restored. If, on the contrary, you fail to remove her from her home, she goes on from bad to worse ; she takes to her bed, eats less food, drinks more wine and brandy, until having become one mass of fatty degeneration, life can hold no longer, and death ends the scene. This lady has been killed with kindness. This is no imaginary case : my mind's eye is carrying me to the bedside of more than one such instance. Do not then assume that alcohol is an equivalent to a tonic, and that it must be necessarily administered because your patient is weak. It may be that that very weakness is due to the long-continued pernicious effects of this same stimulant ; indeed, as you have often heard me say in the out-patient room, if a man comes into our presence with a tottering gait, bloated face, and his nervous energy all gone, you may be quite sure that he has been taking ‘strengthening’ things all his life.”*

But in this paper I am to give my own experience of the treatment of disease. Having been practically an abstainer nearly all my life, I had been led to give the habit of ordering alcoholic drinks for my patients more than ordinary attention, and from the experience of a large practice for twenty-five years, during nine of which I held a public appointment, giving me vast opportunities of observing disease, I have gradually grown stronger and stronger in my opinion as to the mischievous effects of alcoholic drinks taken in moderation by persons either in a state of health or of disease. Did the time allow, I could enumerate a large number of cases of successful treatment of delirium tremens,

* *Vide* Dr. Wilks's Lecture, published by Tweedie, 337, Strand, price 1d. ; or extracts in the *Lancet* of May 18, 1867.

fever, pneumonia, bronchitis, erysipelas, and almost every other disease, some of them of extreme gravity, where no stimulants were ordered.

An instance came under my own observation illustrating the evil effects of directing patients to take alcoholic drinks as remedies. I was attending an old lady, who was suffering from disease of the liver of which she was not likely to recover, resulting from the habitual use of alcoholic drinks. Her daughter, being very anxious about her, proposed a consultation with an eminent hospital physician. We met, and the doctor came to the same conclusion as myself as to the disease and its cause. The family came in to hear the doctor's opinion, when, with sundry melancholy shakes of the head, he informed them of the nature of the malady, and its origin, the habitual use of alcoholic stimulants ; when he received in reply, "Oh, doctor, it cannot be so ; she came and consulted you about fourteen years ago for a pain in her back, for which you directed her to take a little gin-and-water, and, as it generally did her good, she has continued the practice ever since." Of course the doctor had not a word to reply.

There is one caution I would like to give abstainers generally, though, ordinarily speaking, it does not apply to the public at large, certainly not to non-abstaining working men, viz., not to work too much. I have found abstainers generally exceedingly active and energetic, both in their ordinary business and in works of philanthropy and benevolence. They must remember that they are not made of iron. They are frequently tempted to go without their ordinary meals, or to take them very irregularly from press of business and other causes. Working in some instances too many hours a day, and not taking sufficient sleep, it is no wonder that occasionally they get a little dyspeptic, feel a lassitude, &c., which their friends, and unfortunately, often their medical man, also attribute to their abstinence from alcoholic drinks, and after a great deal of persuasion they are sometimes induced to give up their principles. Whereas their real remedy (seeing they are overtaking their powers) is temporary rest from work, judicious dieting, a suitable tonic, with change of air and scene, and when they recover, limiting the amount of work, not to what they can just absolutely endure, but to what can be performed with ease. Persons not naturally strong cannot be expected to have the endurance of others whose physical strength is twice as great ; so it will not do to measure the amount of active exertion suitable for you by what others, possessing a much more vigorous constitution than yourselves, have done, or are doing. I heard a gentleman lately state in an evening gathering that was the third meeting he had taken an active part in that day. Speakers and others should so arrange their engagements that they may not have such an amount of exhaustive duty to perform consecutively, so that their health may not suffer.

J. T. MITCHELL, M.D., LONDON.

NOTHING can tend more effectually to convince the public of what is the most wholesome, and therefore the best habitual and ordinary drink, than a discussion, held among those members of the medical profession who have the courage to avow their honest convictions on the subject, believing that good water, with very few exceptions, is always the best ; thus disregarding the strong influence which the almost universal love of stimulating drink has upon the expressed opinions of so many professional advisers, causing them too freely to encourage habits which so frequently lead to excess, and so to the destruction of health and happiness.

With these considerations, and having been invited by a circular addressed to medical men by the Secretary of the Temperance League, to state my opinion on the subject, I have compiled a short review of my own experience, relating to the benefits which those enjoy who habitually abstain from stimulating drink, as observed during the last thirty-five years in my own personal habits, as well as in those of others, and that in a very extensive field of observation.

At the commencement of this period I began myself entirely to abstain from the use of all kinds of fermented liquor, "except for a medicinal purpose, or in a religious ordinance," from which time continuously during twenty years no kind of drink containing alcohol ever passed my lips, except at the communion table ; during which period I never suffered one day's illness, except what was the result of an accidental injury received in the performance of an operation, from which,

although it was of a dangerous tendency, I very speedily recovered. And now, at an age advanced beyond seventy years, I have preserved almost all the energies and capabilities which I had as a young man, so as to be equal to the emergencies peculiarly occurring in a speciality of my practice, in which for many years I have had often to assist others in conducting perilous cases of instrumental and manual midwifery, requiring great presence of mind, promptitude, and energy of action.

In the year 1831 I was appointed parochial medical officer of one of the largest districts of the parish of Lambeth, where I was thrown into contact with the most extensive suffering and degraded condition in which human nature can exist, the chief cause of which soon discovered itself in the intemperate habits of the people—habits which, in most instances, had been gradually induced by what was considered temperate and necessary custom. At this time, and for some time before, I had advocated the practice involved in the principles of the old temperance society, in which the use of ardent spirits alone was denounced; but this did very little in controlling the evils of intemperance, and in 1835, as soon as I heard of the new advocacy of the personal habit of abstinence from all fermented drink, I at once adopted it, and actively, from house to house, and from bedside to bedside, promoted it; when I soon found that of those who adopted this new system the greater part soon ceased to be patients, and many of the suffering class of poor ceased to be paupers.

Beyond the experience which this public office gave me, I have also had the benefit of observations made on a large community whose lives have been insured in the Temperance and General Provident Office during the last twenty-eight years; in which institution, from its origin, I have held the office of medical director. This institution is constituted of two classes of insurers—of those who totally abstain from the use of alcoholic drinks as articles of diet, and of those who do not; the latter class, also, being admitted members only after having undergone the most rigid investigation, as to their strictly temperate habits; and when any candidate offers himself for insurance whose habits are in any degree free, indeed far short of being intemperate, he is rejected. In this community it has been plainly demonstrated by a careful investigation of the actuary, that the abstaining lives are by a large percentage more valuable than are those of the other class, and consequently on the distribution of profits of their department share larger bonuses; amongst whom also many, not being bound by an undertaking to abstain, although of temperate habits when insured, have gradually fallen into habits of free living and excess, and ruin to their health; some even into a state of mental derangement, and others into delirium tremens.

I have most cheerfully contributed this short statement, which I hope will tend to show that not only does no physical harm result from habits of general abstinence from the use of fermented drink as common diet, but that such a practice tends to a condition of prolonged health, comfort, and longevity; whilst those who adopt them become living examples of the benefits arising from their abstaining habits, and thus benefit those with whom they associate in life.

In this expression of opinion I do not wish to diminish the real value of alcoholic stimulus in its legitimate and truly medicinal use. For there are circumstances and conditions of the body when the use of this agent is imperatively demanded, and when it would be criminal to withhold its administration, as no article in the *Materia Medica* can supply its place with anything like the same benefit. But the evils which arise from its too constant and almost indiscriminate recommendation are most extensive and detrimental, not only to present health, but also by generating habits of future indulgence, which go on too frequently so to increase until they end in ruin, destroying every blessing that can make life valuable.

R. B. GRINDROD, M.D., LL.B., MALVERN.

I HAVE now been a pledged abstainer from alcoholic drinks for about thirty-six years. I believe that I was the first medical man in the United Kingdom to place my name to a document involving the principle and practice of total abstinence.

In 1838 I reduced to writing my then views and investigations of the subject in most or all of its bearings on individual and national interests, and published

them as the prize essay, "Bacchus." I am not aware that I have reason to withdraw any statements or views enunciated in that book. On the contrary, thirty years of additional and extended experience have only tended to confirm me in the full belief that to persons in health alcoholic liquors are not only not necessary, but absolutely injurious ; and I employ this language to their use as ordinary beverages in every quantity and in every form of combination.

I can give the testimony of long experience, personal and medical, to the value of total abstinence.

I fully believe also in its universal adaptability, even in respect to the artificial habits of society, the use of alcoholic stimulants forming another artificial element in modern life, and not in any sense counteracting the conditions for which they are professedly taken.

There are a few points to which I would direct the attention of the Medical Conference, and these chiefly on medical grounds.

The first is the necessity of extending information as *to the formation of the drinking habit*, which, in its first stage at least, is quite as much, if not more, a disease of physical than of moral growth. My medical experience leads me to the full conviction that the vice of drunkenness is a natural consequence of drinking, and that the effect of moderate drinking is to create a desire for increased indulgence. I believe this to be the effect of all diffusible stimulants, but especially of alcoholic liquors. If a larger mass of individuals do not become inebriate—and the number is fearfully large—I attribute it to the counteractive influences of religious and moral culture.

I am, then, more than ever convinced that the view so long ago enunciated in "Bacchus" is correct—that drunkenness is a *disease*, physical as well as moral, and consequently requires physical as well as moral remedies. Until this view has been thoroughly ventilated and established, I am afraid that our efforts, in particular among the members of our Christian Churches, will be comparatively fruitless.

If the Conference could issue a medical document on this point, pointing out, in scientific language, the physical growth of intemperance as the natural result of drinking intoxicating liquors, it would, in my opinion, render an essential service to the cause of scientific and moral truth. By the phrase *intemperance*, I do not refer to those individuals who to the outward eye manifest signs of inebriation, but to that vast mass of the community who drink to an extent which induces an abnormal influence both on their physical and moral being.

I know of no other cure for intemperance but total abstinence. I use these words in the medical sense, and in reference to a disease. During thirty years I have had numerous inebriates under my care, and have found it impossible to conquer the appetite so long as it was fed, to however limited an extent, by the cause of the disease. I may add that in all cases, after long abstinence, a recurrence to alcoholic indulgence, however moderate, had led again, and that rapidly, to the re-formation of the malady. This indicates a point to which I would earnestly direct the attention of the Conference—that *to ensure permanent reformation in the inebriate the abstinence from stimulants must be permanent*. It is the only chance of safety.

The habits of abstainers form a hindrance to the successful practice of total abstinence. On this point I cannot too strongly urge the attention of the Conference. A considerable number of teetotalers appear to imagine that the negative habit of abstaining from alcoholic liquor is a guarantee that they may indulge in practices absolutely opposed to hygienic laws, and attribute those effects to total abstinence which ought alone to be referred to other and explicable causes—such as irregularities in diet, excessive smoking, free indulgence in tea and coffee, over physical and intellectual exertion, and harassing business and other cares. Teetotalers should be instructed that total abstinence is only a cure for indulgence in drink, and not, in a physical sense, a remedy for other evils induced by other causes. Hence the necessity of attention, in particular in early converts, to hygienic laws, such as a due regulation of the skin, proper diet, adequate outdoor exercise, and a discontinuance of that excess in mental labour, which so frequently leads to alcoholic indulgences as a relief from nerve-exhaustion. The Conference would in my opinion act wisely in issuing a

document based on medical experience directing attention to these points. The want of attention to them I know to be the chief cause why so many public men—in particular ministers of the Gospel—recede from the practice of total abstinence.

And, lastly, information should be widely extended as to the non-efficiency of alcoholic liquors in their ordinary medical application. The domestic employment of spirituous liquors is a prolific source of intemperance. The prescription of these compounds by medical men I know to be a common cause of the formation of the inebriate appetite. On this ground I would urge the Conference to issue an appeal to the members of the medical profession, earnestly drawing their attention to a subject of such vital interest, and entreating them by greater caution in the prescription of alcoholic compounds, and by the use of other and equally efficient means—to aid in the extension of a cause which, whether viewed in its individual or general interests, is unquestionably of national importance.

JOHN HIGGINBOTTOM, F.R.S., NOTTINGHAM.

HAVING advocated the cause of total abstinence from all intoxicating liquors for many years, and published a number of papers on the subject in various medical periodicals, and also tracts for the public, it is not necessary for me to enter into detail. I shall therefore only give a short summary of my personal and professional experience.

I personally commenced abstaining from alcohol in every form in the year 1806, when eighteen years and six months old. I am eighty years and eleven months old, so that I have been sixty-two years and five months a teetotaler. Through the blessing of God, my physical and mental powers are good. I have none of the “three warnings” that my work is done, being neither deaf, lame, nor blind. I still continue to visit my patients.

I never ordered alcohol in any form as a beverage, or as a “*placebo*” (*i.e.*, “I will please”), considering it was not necessary for health, comfort, or happiness; on the contrary, that it produced disease, misery, and death.

As a medicine, there were only a few disorders and diseases for which I prescribed alcohol, *viz.*, English cholera, fever, uterine hæmorrhage, *delirium tremens*, and cases of exhaustion and sinking. After twenty years of careful and practical investigation of the nature and effects of alcohol, I fully proved that the alcoholic treatment was in all those maladies most dangerous and often fatal.

By the *use* of alcohol in these disorders and diseases before named, I was led to the *disuse* of it, and to the adoption of a therapeutic agent, which I employed at different periods for various maladies during the first twenty years of my practice, publishing the results in medical periodical works.

This agent proved an effectual remedy in *all* those cases in which the alcoholic treatment had been injurious and often fatal.

It seems strange to myself, and I have no doubt to my medical brethren, and must be more so to the public, that such a remedy should have taken the place of the alcoholic treatment; but I have now fully tested its efficacy during now nearly forty years of wide and varied practice.

The remedy is, ipecacuanha in emetic doses, which acts as a stimulant, restorative, eliminative, and adjurant, in various cases of disorder and disease.

The action of ipecacuanha emetic excites the whole nervous, vascular, and respiratory system, consequently the heart, the lungs, and the liver, balancing the circulation: it acts also as a tonic stimulant to the general capillary organisation, thus restoring and producing a more normal state of the secreting and assimilating organs. The operation of the emetic produces a general reaction of the whole system, the torpid and congestive state of the various organs is roused and relieved, and the sanitary effects of the emetic are evident in bringing the system generally into a more active and healthy state, without producing any debility; on the contrary, I have often seen its effects in quickly restoring the sinking powers of the system in extreme cases of syncope, hæmorrhage, &c.

Alcohol, on the contrary, is a powerful narcotic-acrid poison, and is, from its stimulant, irritant, and narcotic qualities, a very dangerous agent.

When alcohol is taken into the stomach it irritates the mucous membrane of

the stomach, and directly acts upon the nervous system, is carried into the circulation of the blood, affects every fibre of the body, and is found in the different secretions unchanged in its nature. Alcohol taken into the body deadens and weakens the nerves, hardens and contracts the animal fibre; the capillaries, arteries, veins, lymphatics, and other canals or ducts, are lessened in their diameters, and are ultimately obstructed, so that the foundation of many diseases is at once laid. Alcohol has no specific effect on any organ of the body for the cure of any disease, but is often the principal cause of disease; every disease is aggravated by it, and many are generated by its use. It is a "mockery," even as a medicine. It promises strength from the temporary excitement it gives, and deceives by adding no permanent strength, but an increased debility.

My paper on ipecacuanha was written for the purpose of being read before the British Medical Association at Oxford, in August last, 1868. It was published in the February numbers, 13, 20, and 27, of the *British Medical Journal*, 1869.

In the controversy published in the *British Medical Journal* of 1861 and 1862, under the title, "Is Alcohol Food or Physic?" I decidedly contended that it was neither. A distinguished London physician said, "As far as I know, Mr. Higginbottom alone makes that assertion, that alcohol is neither food nor physic." I could not have made that assertion had I not given both plans of treatment a fair trial, in order to test the efficacy of the ipecacuanha remedy, which superseded the use of alcohol in all those grave disorders and diseases for which I formerly used alcohol. After an extensive practice of nearly forty years, I have found that by abandoning all alcoholic treatment acute disease is much more readily cured, and chronic disease much more manageable.

I have observed those persons who have depended on alcohol in any form for strength and health, have shortened their lives in proportion to the quantity imbibed, taking into consideration the age, temperament, and habits of the individuals.

Alcohol is a cumulative poison, and if even a small quantity be taken daily does its destructive and deadly work. "In the physical world there is no forgiveness of sins."

HENRY MUDGE, M.R.C.S., BODMIN.

It is with some difficulty, in consequence of being unable to write with my own hand, that I respond to the request of the National Temperance League for some remarks on the medical aspect of the teetotal controversy.

With regard to the first particular of their request, I may say that I have practised personal abstinence for over thirty-two years, and during that time have seen in my own sphere of observation a considerable diminution in the use of alcohol, and that the drug is not needed to anything like the quantity in which it is commonly used. I am convinced, too, that cases of mischief from its medical prescription are sufficiently numerous to warrant its being designated a dangerous article, and to restrict its administration (if used at all) solely to the mode of being compounded and dispensed by the apothecary, and that it should not be given in the form of the ordinary drinks.

On the head of health and longevity, I content myself with referring to the experience and statistics of the temperance life insurance offices, which are decisive, supplemented as they are by trials of a more limited character, as in gaols, friendly societies, and poor-law unions. All these loudly proclaim what I believe to be a solemn and important truth—viz., the less alcohol the better health and the longer life. In fact, there never has been made a trial of diminished alcohol, or none at all, without good resulting and predominating. These statistics would make a useful tract.

The causes which retard the adhesion of members of the medical profession to the temperance movement may be considered to be both common and proper, as ignorance, fashion, gain, and professional status. These all have, of course, to be combated in the ordinary way, of press, platform, and social intercourse; but,—and this brings me to offer a few words of advice as to the inquiry made in the League circular about the means that can be most efficiently employed to advance

the temperance movement amongst members of the profession,—I am convinced that the good work will not be speedily advanced unless the services of a competent paid agent be secured, who should be a duly qualified practitioner. The following duties would at once fall to his lot, and be followed in due course by others :—

1. Let him revive and press on the certificate movement, so nobly begun by the late Mr. Dunlop of lamented memory. The method of impressing the mind, both professional and public, through this well-known certificate, is at once short and forcible, and almost a new generation of practitioners have sprung up since the effort fell into disuse.

2. Let the agent gather up the cases of disease successfully treated without the administration of alcohol, and present them in a readable and comprehensive form to the profession. Such cases must be numerous and important, embracing every form of disease, unless teetotal practitioners are recreant to their principles, which there is no ground for supposing to be the case. The note-books of Beaumont, Edmunds, Higginbottom, Martin, Munroe, Popham, and sundry others, would afford ample and instructive, if not convincing, *materiel* for this purpose. These cases will never be gathered into a focus if left to individual effort to supply them, while a remembrancer from an authorised central correspondent would be likely to secure them.

3. Open a dispensary, or, better still, an hospital, where all the patients should be treated apart from alcohol, and the result of the treatment duly recorded. It may be useful to say that dispensary patients are estimated to cost on the average 3s. each for medicine ; thus for £200 a record of 1000 dispensary cases might be got, and the result would come out, I firmly believe, so much in favour of the non-alcoholic treatment as to secure respectful attention, especially from the benevolent public, who are now mulcted in such heavy charges for worse than useless liquors. Beds in hospital practice cannot be maintained at less than £20 each per annum, but there the work could be much more efficiently done if the requisite funds could be obtained.

Suppose ten beds for medical and ten for surgical cases—twenty in all—could be got for a limited period, say three years ; the cost of this effort would be £400 a year. Can any of our richer friends command this sum ? Their reward would be ample. I have taken occasion, now and then, when I have seen the report of cases in our periodicals, to correspond with members of the profession respecting their reasons for administering alcohol, and I have been surprised yet pleased to find from their answers that they attributed, after all, little or no therapeutic value to alcohol, but that in ordering it, they were simply pursuing a routine practice, no doubt agreeable to most of their patients. I might give, if I had their permission, names of the highest repute from Edinburgh, London, and elsewhere.

On the whole, then, I am of opinion that the great thing wanted to influence the medical profession is a body of evidence of the success of non-alcoholic treatment, and that the great desideratum of the day is, first how to get it, and then how to furnish the members of the profession generally with it—taking care that it be at the same time presented in a form perfectly intelligible to the general public, so as to secure their reflex action in the work.

B. COLLENETTE, L.R.C.P., GUERNSEY.

FOR the first four or five years of my professional life, I, like others, followed the usual practice and administered brandy, wine, and beer, to my patients ; but some twenty-nine years since I became convinced that alcoholic drinks were both injurious as articles of diet and unnecessary as a medicine, and I have ever since been a personal abstainer, and have also banished them from my practice, and I have never had cause to regret having done so. Occasionally, indeed, I have had to yield to the wishes and opinions of some of my medical brethren, who in consultation have thought that the case we were treating would be benefited by the administration of alcoholics, and in some half-dozen cases, when away from all other stimulants, I have been compelled to have recourse to them ; but I cannot in truth say that I have ever derived such benefit from their use as would induce me to again administer them except under compulsion. It is my firm and deep conviction that as a medicine they are for the most part injurious, and almost if not altogether un-

necessary ; and this opinion I have formed after having attended and successfully brought-through without their use cases of typhus, malignant scarlet and other fevers, cholera, smallpox, delirium tremens, floodings, exhaustive and other diseases, in which it is the usual practice to administer large quantities of brandy, wine, or beer, and the only patient that I have ever lost after operation was the only one not strictly treated on the non-alcoholic principle. I may be permitted to say that I have thus for the last twenty-nine years treated without alcoholics all classes of patients, the rich and the poor, the sober and the drunkard, the over-fed and the half-starved, the over-worked and the idler, the moral and the grossly immoral, the inhabitants of well-ventilated and well-drained dwellings and those huddled together in miserable hovels without ventilation or drainage of any kind, the patients of an hospital for many years (fourteen), and the paupers of a populous parish for twenty-eight years. Under all these different circumstances, and in all these different cases, I have not found it necessary (except as previously stated) to administer alcoholic stimulants, and I am more than ever convinced that the practice is right, and more firmly resolved than ever to continue in the same course.

L. M. BENNETT, M.R.C.S., WINTERTON.

I AM proud to be able to state that I can rank myself amongst the earliest of the medical men who, upwards of thirty years ago, advocated and practised total abstinence, and at the same time discarded alcohol as a medicine in the treatment of disease. At that time to do so was a very difficult task ; and although many medical men have done so of late years, I must say great credit is due to such men as Mr. Higginbottom, of Nottingham ; Dr. Grindrod, of Malvern ; Mr. Mudge, of Bodmin ; the late Mr. Beaumont, of Bradford ; Dr. Fothergill, of Darlington, and others. I have myself for thirty-five years practised in the country with a large Poor-law Union appointment, and now have not the least hesitation in stating that I more than ever believe there is no curable disease that cannot be treated and cured without the use of alcohol ; and I will go further and say, I believe there are many diseases that cannot be cured without the disuse of it even in moderate quantities, such as rheumatism and even consumption, and I have found the greatest benefit result from their disuse. My treatment of the above-named diseases, also hæmorrhages, fevers, and those of great discharges of matter, have during the above-named time been without alcohol, and the result has been as follows : I have attended about 3000 cases of childbirth, and have had many cases of severe flooding and exhaustion ; still, without the use of alcohol in the treatment, I feel proud to say I have never lost a single case from those causes. During the last two years I have had under my care upwards of 400 cases of fever, typhoid in type, all treated without wine or brandy, and the deaths from that cause were under five per cent., and I believe the recoveries were more rapid than those treated by stimulants. The greatest cause of intemperance at present, I believe to be the indiscriminate manner in which stimulants are ordered by medical men, and more particularly in the present day in the shape of rum-and-milk, and several instances have come under my notice where, by following that treatment, intemperance has been the result.

A. W. WALLACE, M.D., PARSONSTOWN.

1. The writer was at one time in the habit of prescribing alcohol in various forms pretty freely in disease, under the impression that it was a stimulant and supporter of animal heat. For some years he has entirely discontinued prescribing it. He has not observed any very appreciable difference in the course of the diseases he has had to treat. He therefore concludes that in many cases the alcohol has no very great effect, either one way or other, on the progress of disease.

2. He has made a similar observation in reference to the use of mercury. A brother practitioner gives mercury in some form in almost every case he treats. The writer, never. Yet there is no very perceptible difference in the results of the treatment.

3. The writer has had a pretty full experience of alcoholic and non-alcoholic treatment in his own person. He has for some years been subject to attacks of dyspepsia, apparently dependent on want of due supply of nervous energy to the stomach. They come on from over fatigue ; begin with nausea, loss of appetite, pyrosis, and sometimes vomiting of undigested food. After a few days this goes off, and abdominal pains come on, sometimes in the epigastrium, going through to the back, sometimes lower down. The pain comes on about four hours after a meal. For some years brandy at dinner-time was taken, whenever the attack came on. The attacks used to last at least three months. For the last three years, whenever the attack came on a milk diet was adopted, and the attack went off in ten days or a fortnight.

SIMON NICOLLS, M.D., LONGFORD.

IT is now more than twenty-eight years since I became medical officer to the Longford Union Workhouse. For the first seven or eight years I used porter, wine, and spirits in the usual way, and with the usual results—*a large mortality among the sick, and much confusion, irregularity, and misconduct among the attendants*. Advice, remonstrance, and even complaint were ineffectual. I saw the use of alcoholic stimulants was the cause of all the evil, and resolved, at any hazard, to discontinue their use. Matters might improve, but they could not be worse. For some months I had much difficulty to contend with, as it was alleged on all hands that no hospital could be carried on without a liberal allowance of stimulants. I saw clearly I was in the right way, and made up my mind at all risks to pursue it, and stand or fall by the result. My determination was rewarded with success: the large mortality soon became less, and the unmanageable nurses and attendants, being deprived of the handling and tasting of the stimulants, sought employment elsewhere, and were replaced by more orderly persons. It is now more than twenty years since wine, spirits, or porter, were used in the hospitals under my care, and the result in every way has been most satisfactory. Putting economy entirely out of view, in my opinion the disuse of alcoholic stimulants tends much to promote health and morals even in a workhouse hospital. I have, for a length of time considered the use of alcoholic stimulants to be the fruitful source of murder, robbery, prostitution, poverty, destitution, and disease. Would to God that the better classes—and amongst them medical men and clergymen—would, for the promotion of morality and virtue, desist from the use, even in moderation, of wine and spirits.

CALEB H. YEWEN, M.D., LONDON.

I SIGNED the temperance pledge in 1837, and in 1841, in the Guy-street Institute, Leamington, delivered my first lecture on the physical effects of alcohols. During the subsequent twenty-eight years I have mingled with persons of every clime, and treated patients suffering from disease in all its varieties, affecting alike the digestive, respiratory, sanguineous, nervous, sexual, and excrement functions, and the result of my experience and observation clearly shows that the use of alcohol as a therapeutic agent is bad practice. I possess no specific remedy, no panacea, and in professional skill and experience I boast of no superiority over my brethren, either in this country or in the States. How is it, then, that in my obstetric practice puerperal fever is unknown, hæmorrhage readily controlled, and deaths from malignant and typhoid diseases, affections of the bronchia, delirium tremens, phthisis, &c., do not amount to two per cent. ? The answer is contained in the fact that during the past eleven years I have not in a single instance prescribed alcohol, either in the form of brandy, wine, or malt liquor, and that in complaints incidental to persons of sedentary habits, or consequent upon a long residence in hot climates, I invariably proscribe the use of tobacco and enjoin daily ablution of cold water. I will not intrude further upon the time of the Conference than to express my thorough conviction that the daily imbibition of alcoholic stimulants in any form is opposed to health and longevity, and their employment in diseases (especially those of the arterial system and cerebral organs) is bad practice, and generally attended with the most lamentable consequences.

BENJAMIN TOWNSON, M.R.C.S., LIVERPOOL.

IT is my most firm impression, from fair experience in a mixed practice, that life is safer, and health generally better, in the abstainer than in the moderate drinker. I am quite sure, also, that the attacks of illness are less frequent, more gentle, and terminate in recovery more rapidly in the former than in the latter. There are also some forms of disease which afflict the moderate drinker, from which the abstainer has an immunity. As to the question whether the bodily powers maintain their vigour in old age so well upon total abstinence principles, I have the strongest belief that there is no increased disposition to break down, and especially as I never yet saw a case of senile gangrene in an abstainer, which, I think, is one very clear evidence that the balance of the circulation is well maintained. I know of no disease which in its treatment demands the use of alcoholic drinks, and which cannot be as successfully treated without them, if I give the slight exception to fever; and knowing them to be the most fruitful source of disease and premature death, it becomes the duty of each one of us to use our earnest efforts to stem the torrent of their consumption, and disabuse the public mind of the idea that they are either necessary or desirable as an article of diet or social pleasure. For the last ten years I have had charge of the Post Office, including letter-carriers, also for twenty years 500 of our police. I have been in practice since 1841.

WILLIAM PEARSE, M.R.C.S., PLYMOUTH.

MY experience of thirty-one years and a half of abstinence, in an active and extensive country practice of many years at Launceston, Cornwall, riding on an average on horseback about a hundred and twenty miles per week, and for several years in this populous town, with observations in society, and specially the working classes, has shown me that total abstinence has advantages which the world of moderate drinkers know but little of. In cases which not unfrequently occur I see the most reckless use of stimulants, specially brandy, in cases of active inflammatory disease, directed by medical men, by which the efforts of nature to obtain relief are quite obstructed, with fatal results. I would call the attention of the conference to the practice of district practitioners among the poor, their frequent directions of stimulating drinks, generally to the injury of the patients, while such medical directions give a sanction to their use which leads the poor to continue to take them, thereby sinking themselves in hopeless poverty, and entailing a very heavy charge on the ratepayers and general public. I would that the temperance friends use their influence in election of guardians who practise strict temperance, who should appoint medical men to attend the poor who will try to stem this torrent of vice, and this cause of disease and also of aggravation of disease.

ALFRED PRIDEAUX, M.R.C.S., LISKEARD.

FOR several years I have been a strict total abstainer, in other words a staunch teetotaler, not having tasted anything stronger than tea or coffee, and I can bear my testimony to the advantage of this over moderation. I have never had a wish for wine or beer, nor have I ever felt either would do me any good. My practice has been a laborious one, and when fatigued with loss of rest or overtaxed mentally, rest has been my remedy, and I believe is all that is necessary. I quite agree with all that Dr. Wilks, of Guy's Hospital, says about alcohol. I should not like to erase it from the list of medicinal agents, but it should be measured out as other remedies, and never given at random. The evils that follow the indiscriminate use of alcohol in treating disease are worse than the malady it is intended to cure. Strong beef-tea and other strengthening diet, with ammonia, &c., can generally be substituted for brandy, or any other alcoholic drink. The extent of drunkenness in the neighbourhood where I reside calls into action my most strenuous exertions in behalf of the temperance movement.

FREDERICK COLLIER, M.R.C.S., LEAMINGTON.

IT would give me very great pleasure could I possibly be present at your conference, being myself a very warm advocate of total abstinence principles. In the *Church of England Temperance Magazine* for April, 1866, I gave a little account of my medical experience, in which I stated that having suffered severely from dyspepsia and its consequences about twenty years ago, I adopted with great relief a farinaceous and milk diet, abstaining altogether from animal food and alcoholic drinks. The former I resumed moderately in a few years, but the intoxicants I hope I have abandoned for ever. With the blessing of God upon this regimen, and a change of residence to this town, I am stronger and more active at seventy than I was at fifty years of age. Standing almost or quite alone amongst my medical brethren at Leamington, it is no wonder that I should rejoice to find that there are in other parts of the country a few who can see things as I do, and who know that alcoholics are very rarely if ever necessary, at any rate not as common beverages.

C. R. PRANCE, M.D., PLYMOUTH.

I HAVE abstained for some years from alcoholic beverages, partly for example's sake, and partly that I may more consistently in my practice recommend abstinence to others, especially to those whom I meet with suffering from the evil effects of drink, and that they may not be able to turn round on me and say, "Why do you take it, then?" Did you not ask me for my opinion, drawn from professional experience, I should deem it superfluous to state that unquestionably a large proportion of the cases which we have to treat owe their origin directly or indirectly to the effects of alcoholic drinks, and the prospect of a cure in any given case is largely influenced by the patient's previous habits with regard to drink. In practice it is extremely difficult to induce abstinence. A patient will trust his medical man's opinion as to the nature of his disease, and will take the medicine he orders with regularity, but as regards his glass of beer or wine he is very apt to rely on his own private judgment, and follow his own inclinations.

R. M. FORSAYETH, M.D., TEMPLEMORE.

I HAVE been an abstainer for several years, and am consequently convinced of the important benefits resulting from the practice. I have also for many years tested the beneficial results of withholding alcoholics as remedies in numerous diseases where generally indiscriminately administered—fevers, eruptive diseases, confinements, hæmorrhage, gout, &c., &c. Why, Turkish bath, Holloway's pills, nay, even elixir vitæ itself, fade into insignificance, no comparison with it, in the estimation of those who so ignorantly use it! I confidently affirm that in every one of our hospitals, few if any patients leave their precincts, who have not been subjected to the influence of this potent drug in one form or another. Surely, it is high time our profession should arouse itself from this physiological dream regarding its action upon the human economy, and publicly remove this foul blot of promoting intemperance from off its noble and philanthropic escutcheon.

J. J. RITCHIE, M.R.C.S., LEEK.

I AM sorry that my engagements will prevent me attending the conference, for it would have given me great pleasure to meet so many abstaining brothers, and hear the results of their experience in relation to this question; although I know beforehand that their united testimony must be in favour of the practice of total abstinence from all intoxicating drinks being *most conducive to the health and longevity of their patients, but very inimical to the pocket interests of themselves*. My own experience is that my teetotal patients are seldom ill, and that they get well very soon again if they are attacked by disease. A higher principle than that of gain must influence a medical man's mind, or he will never advocate the doctrine of total abstinence.

J. R. SWANTON, M.D., BANTRY.

I HAVE for several years entertained a decided objection to the habitual use of stimulants by persons in health; and I have reason to know that the use of stimulants in a state of disease has led to evil consequences, particularly in the young, when health has been restored. For myself, I find I can enjoy excellent health and endure an average amount of physical and mental labour while abstaining totally from stimulants. The objects contemplated by the League have my warmest sympathy, and I am resolved more than ever to discountenance the general and indiscriminate use of intoxicating liquors.

SAMUEL BOOTH, M.R.C.S., HUDDERSFIELD.

I HAVE been a teetotaler about thirty years, and can bear my humble testimony that the principles of total abstinence from *all* intoxicating drinks have never been injurious but *healthful* to me, engaged as I have been for nearly forty years in the very extensive general practice of my profession. I am stronger and healthier at sixty years of age than I was at thirty, and can bear more work mentally and physically as a teetotaler, than when in my younger days I used to take beer, porter, and wine.

APPENDIX.

I.

DR. WILKS ON STIMULANTS.

IN a clinical lecture delivered at Guy's Hospital, in 1867, by Samuel Wilks, M.D., Physician to and Lecturer on Medicine at the Hospital, he said :—Endeavour, if you can, to erase from your minds that it is a proven fact that alcohol is a tonic or a necessary part of everyone's beverage. This is assumed by a large mass of people; and the meaning of the question which your patient puts to you when he says, "What shall I drink?" is not "Shall I take a stimulant or leave it alone?" but "Shall I take wine, beer, or spirits?" He often confesses that he is in a great difficulty; he finds none of them agree with him; but that he must take "something" appears as necessary as eating his daily bread; the alternative never having formed part of his calculation. I say it is assumed that a strength-giving property lies in these drinks—that just in proportion to a man's feeling of weakness, so will he require one of them: in ordinary health he may only want his beer; but if ill, his wine; and if very ill, his spirits. Now this popular opinion is shared in, I am sorry to say, by many in the profession; if the patient is weak, he wants "support," this term carrying too frequently with it the necessary idea of wine or spirits. I should be sorry to say that the doctor panders to the public taste, since he is too often already in accord with it; but the consequence of such an agreement between patient and medical man resolves itself into this, that an extra stimulant is prescribed. You might ask to what complaints do I refer when I speak of this too common advice; but I need only repeat the word "patient," for it matters little what is the nature of the disease, since the reasons for the treatment are applicable to all complaints, and are founded on this simple proposition: all persons who are ill are weak; they have lost strength; they require it to be restored; alcohol is a supporter and a tonic, therefore alcohol is a remedy for all diseases. This is no parody, for I have heard the argument set forth in some such words; and practically it is adopted by many, for I constantly hear medical men say they give brandy to all their patients, for they always find them "low." Brandy, indeed, becomes with some as much a universal remedy as revalenta, chlorodyne, Morrison's pills, or any other quack medicine. Moreover, it is a medicine of which the patients approve, assuming as they do its supporting and strength-giving powers. You therefore cannot do better, if you fear no compunctions in converting your profession into a mere trade, to say to all

your patients, after feeling their pulse, that they are very low—that you are sure they do not take enough ; and order them several glasses of wine daily. Should they be exceedingly ill with some desperate organic complaint, then you must turn your remarks to the friends, and speak of the necessity of supporting the patient by giving him as much brandy as can be poured down his throat. By this method you are sure to give “satisfaction ;” for, should the patient die without such treatment, you may have the credit of letting him “slip through your fingers ;” whilst, if he die with it, you have done your best. If you kill a dozen patients with brandy, you need have no fear, “you have done your best.” This, I say, would be a very comfortable and lucrative mode of practice.

II.

DR. GAIRDNER'S EXPERIMENTS.

IN the *Lancet* of March 12, 1864, there was an article on “Facts and Conclusions as to the use of Alcoholic Stimulants in Typhus Fever,” by W. T. Gairdner, M.D., Physician to the Royal Infirmary, and Professor of the Practice of Physic in the University, Glasgow. Dr. Gairdner showed that the mortality from typhus fever might be greatly reduced by reducing the quantity of alcoholic stimulants usually given ; that this reduction in mortality may take place at all ages, but in a marked degree among the young ; that the young and temperate persons may be advantageously treated with a diminished mortality *without one drop of wine or spirit being given from beginning to end of the fever, except in the rarest casualties*. The reduced mortality, under Dr. Gairdner's mode of treatment, is highly encouraging. It appears that in 595 cases of all ages treated by Dr. Gairdner, the mortality from typhus was only 11·9 per cent. ; whilst under the liberal use of stimulants the mortality for all ages was 17½ per cent. These results are extraordinary, as the average mortality from typhus in the hospitals of England is little less than eighteen per cent. It is well known that typhus fever is not so fatal to the young as to adults, and we see that in 189 unselected cases among the young treated by Dr. Gairdner without stimulants, the mortality was less than 1 per cent. Dr. Gairdner says—“I confess I am strongly persuaded that, to the young, in typhus and very probably in most other fevers, stimulants are not less than actively poisonous and destructive, unless administered with the most extreme caution, and in the most special and critical circumstances.” He further shows that, had the 189 young persons formerly mentioned been in the hands of the late Dr. Todd, under a routine of such extreme stimulation as is indicated in Dr. Todd's book on Acute Diseases, it seems probable that instead of one death in the 189 cases there must have been no fewer than thirty to thirty-five.

III.

MEDICAL DECLARATION

Signed by upwards of 2,000 Medical men, including many of the leading members of the profession :—

WE ARE OF OPINION—1st. That a very large portion of human misery, including poverty, disease, and crime, is induced by the use of alcohol or fermented liquors as beverages.

2nd. That the most perfect health is compatible with total abstinence from all such intoxicating beverages, whether in the form of ardent spirits, or as Wine, Beer, Ale, Porter, Cider, &c., &c.

3rd. That persons accustomed to such drinks may with perfect safety discontinue them entirely, either at once, or gradually after a short time.

4th. That total and universal abstinence from alcoholic liquors, and intoxicating beverages of all sorts, would greatly contribute to the health, the prosperity, the morality, and the happiness of the human race.

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